

Federal Communications Commission,

SVRS is an especially important tool for the entire deaf community and all who rely on SVRS as a tool for communication.

The field I am in involves medical claims. SVRS is especially important when a medical provider, claims adjuster or nurse contacts a deaf person to discuss their medical treatment; imagine if low quality video relay service lead to poor quality images or poorly trained video relay interpreter did not understand ASL well enough to convey medical terms, medicine instructions or treatment plans, and the service mislead the deaf person to making a medical mistake? The FCC would not allow this to happen and to date has structure and regulation in place that promotes quality VRS service so that the public does not suffer. Sorenson Communications can remain in compliance with the FCC because they have the quality leadership in place to manage the resources that the current funding provides. A quality service requires adequate funding.

I have learned that the proposed rate per minute for VRS is less than the current rate. I have learned that this decision will have a negative impact on VRS in general in that VRS service will be compromised and the quality of the calls will decline over time because video relay companies such as Sorenson Communications will not have adequate operating cash from the rate cut to offer a qualified video relay service. People have come to rely heavily on quality SVRS in the short time that it has been available. Adequate dollars are required for continued research and development, marketing to the customers and training. Quality communication is key to the success of this program altogether. What is the purpose of communication if the caller and the receiver do not leave the conversation with a clear message? Cutting the budget undermines the value of VRS and the purpose of the service altogether.

With Sorenson VRS, miscommunication is minimized because of Sorenson's dedication to developing clear Video Relay reception, to the intense training the interpreters receive through Sorenson Communications so that all can benefit from expert interpretation, the ASL certification process and upholding the standards and ethics of VRS that are required for the success of VRS overall.

I have myself used Sorenson VRS to communicate with our deaf employees to discuss injuries, medical treatment and doctor orders and find that this service is a supreme service and we are able to solve problems efficiently, quickly and correctly through SVRS. SVRS works seamlessly.

VRS and the advancements in VRS are very important to our nation and the economy. Deaf individuals and the people they communicate with need a well-run and well-managed form of telecomm to complete daily tasks. Why would it even be considered that a deaf individual be given this wonderful form of communication that Sorenson offers and then be put back into a time and place where the technology they have become used to is taken away or substituted with a substandard form of telecomm?

Being functionally equivalent in society is what the human race strives for, individuals strive to be contributing members of society; all individuals have the ability to be highly functional with the development of great tools such as the telephones and SVRS.

Society has come to value the high quality and well managed service Sorenson Communications has

developed and continues to offer users of VRS. It is important that funding remain in place at adequate levels to allow improvements in the technology and so that all VRS users can be reached and trained in the technology so that they too can benefit from the value that functional equivalence brings to their world. The proposed rate does not allow for continued quality service and advancement in technology.

The deaf community and the people they communicate with deserve to have a conversation that delivers a clear message. If the message is not clear because of a decline in the quality of VRS due to the low rate and little improvement, how will that help the deaf community progress to functional equivalency? How will that help society overall?

Please reconsider setting the rate per minute to a figure that will allow supreme service, clear video, continued training for ASL interpreters, an excellent form of communication and one that will allow Sorenson to continue to improve upon the existing infrastructure that is necessary for functional equivalency. Video Relay is a vital communication tool for everyone. Adequate funding is crucial. Communication set-backs are not something the world looks forward to. We are all asking you to increase the rate structure. We ask you as an undivided nation to keep telecomm moving forward. VRS is a simple fix, no need to make it complicated or challenging for the user. Bringing VRS to deaf individuals is a great advancement in technology, one that I look forward to being a part of. I like my job with Sorenson Communications and see how essential quality communication is for everyone. Please remember these important thoughts as you read through the numerous comments regarding the proposed rate setting.

Remember the important points made by the deaf users in their comments to the FCC and in their testimonials Sorenson presents on their website; there is a very strong desire for clear video so that the users can see ASL signs, there is a need for availability so it is in the community for public use such as in hospitals and schools, users desire highly trained interpreters so that no mistakes in communication are made, improvements in the technology are favored to make VRS easier for all users, there needs to be different platforms and different ways to communicate such as with IPRelay and it needs to be easy to use. These comments are all facets of functional equivalency, something VRS users have with SVRS, something users do not need to see diminish. Thank you for your reconsideration of the rate structure.

Sincerely,

Paula M. Summers